

**CEPPS/IRI Quarterly Report: April 1 – June 30, 2005**  
**LIBERIA: POLITICAL PARTY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM**  
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## **I. SUMMARY**

Political circumstances in Liberia have crippled the development of the country's democratic political process. Democratic institutions are underdeveloped, unorganized, resource-poor, and in some cases, do not even exist. The upcoming October 2005 elections will be a test for Liberia's nascent political institutions and a critical step in the country's democratic progress. To assist Liberians in developing a democratic political process with the accompanying institutions and to contribute to transparent and peaceful elections in Liberia, IRI is implementing a program designed to strengthen the political and electoral processes. Specifically, IRI focuses on the following objectives:

1. To improve political party capacity to implement voter-oriented, effective campaigns;
2. To enable political parties to develop long-term organizational development plans;
3. To strengthen political parties' ability to contribute to Liberia's governance; and
4. To promote party participation to ensure credible and peaceful electoral and political processes.

To meet these objectives during this quarter, IRI-Liberia conducted technical training workshops with Registered Political Parties (RPPs) in Liberia, organized political assessment missions with political parties in selected Liberian counties, and held meetings with other stakeholders to discuss ways to achieve the aforementioned objectives. From April 12-14, 2005, the CEPPS partners in Liberia facilitated a National Forum that brought together a wide host of key national and international stakeholders to discuss and promote *Peaceful and Legitimate Elections in October 2005*. Under IRI-Liberia's technical guidance, a political milestone in Liberia was achieved when 18 Registered Political Parties (RPPs) adopted and signed the first ever Code of Conduct. A signing ceremony concluded the CEPPS-sponsored Stakeholders' Forum.

In April and May, IRI-Liberia and other stakeholders in the *Electoral Process Working Group (EPWG)* held a series of meetings to discuss and analyze developments in the voter registration exercise in Liberia. In response to the parties' calls for specialized training on the voter registration exercise, IRI-Liberia, in coordination with Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS)/Carter Centre-UK in Liberia, facilitated a technical training on the voter registration exercise for party agents.

In May, IRI led a six-member team of international observers that conducted a pre-election assessment in Liberia. Headed by retired U.S. Ambassador Robert Gribbin, the team was comprised of observers from IRI, NDI, the Carter Center, a former secretary of State from the State of Texas and a regional expert from Ghana, met with a host of election stakeholders from the transitional government, the national elections commission, leaders of political parties and

civil society and the international community. Traveling to several regions throughout the country, the assessment mission found the electoral process, and most importantly the registration campaign, credible. Throughout the quarter, IRI-Liberia continued its assessment missions in selected counties within Liberia to ascertain political party activity and development as well as to assess logistical needs for Election Observers and future IRI-led trainings.

In the last week of June, IRI-Liberia conducted a technical workshop for RPPs to enhance the participation of women and youth in politics. Also in this quarter, IRI-Liberia, in concert with NDI-Liberia, facilitated another Civil Society Organization (CSO)/RPP Roundtable that was coordinated by the Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) and addressed “Strengthening Democracy in Liberia: Enhancing Youth Participation in the Political Process.”

## **II. BACKGROUND**

Emerging from a legacy of authoritarianism and militarism, Liberia finds itself at a unique crossroads in its political history and at an exceptional moment in its political development.

Under the Charles Taylor regime and previous administrations that governed Liberia, democratic institutions were systematically suppressed. The True Whig Party “exercised dictatorial control over all facets of life” from the country’s establishment in 1847 until 1980.<sup>1</sup> After taking power in a 1980 coup, the military regime of Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe relied “exclusively on the army to suppress its growing opponents.”<sup>2</sup> Civil war in 1990 led to Doe’s downfall and engulfed the country until 1996. Following a victory in Liberia’s 1997 elections, Charles Taylor’s government repressed the legislature, judiciary, opposition political parties and the independent media.<sup>3</sup> These oppressive circumstances instigated another civil war beginning in 1999 and ending in 2003 with Taylor stepping down and fleeing into exile.

With the departure of former president Charles Taylor, the installation of a transitional government and the presence of United Nations peacekeepers, Liberians have a unique opportunity. Now, more than ever, political conditions exist that will allow Liberians to establish the democratic processes and institutions that were either absent or stifled in the past. Among the institutions that will require strengthening is democratic political participation, specifically through political parties.

As previously mentioned, successive oppressive governments limited meaningful political activities. Opposition political parties who voiced dissenting opinions on government policies or openly recruited supporters often faced harassment, arrest or torture. The country’s history of civil war has also affected the political parties. With armed rebels, undisciplined government soldiers and militia throughout the country, insecurity largely confined political parties to Monrovia and gave them little opportunity to develop support bases in other counties. The finale

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Fitzgerald, Robert Herman and Gilbert M. Khadiagala, *Democracy and Governance Assessment of Liberia: Transition from a Frail State?* (A report submitted to the United States Agency for International Development in August 2004) 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

of Liberia's most recent conflict further hindered the political parties by devastating their existing resources. As fighting reached Monrovia, it brought with it the pillaging that was taking place in other conflict-stricken parts of the country. Political party offices, like many homes and businesses in the city, lost the few resources they had (e.g., computers, fax machines, books, etc.) to looters. All of these circumstances have resulted in political parties with little or no institutional capacity, organizational structures or resources in conducting democratic political activities.

Besides institutional and material deficiencies, Liberia's political parties lack the political substance of developed party organizations. The majority of registered political parties (now the number of RPPs is 30) are "unable to articulate anything approaching a coherent [platform] or lay out a strategy for increasing political support."<sup>4</sup>

IRI-Liberia recognizes the necessity of developed political parties in a stable, pluralistic democracy. In the short-term, developed political parties will provide the Liberian electorate with legitimate options in the upcoming October 2005 elections. In the long-term, including the post-election period, developed political parties will provide a conduit through which constituent needs can influence public policy. Well-organized opposition parties will also serve as an effective check on and balance to the government.

In addition to developed political parties, successful elections are also critical to democratic development. Although transparent and peaceful elections in and of themselves do not necessarily represent the pinnacle of democratic progress, they can certainly move a country toward that goal. Fraudulent or violent elections can similarly hinder a country's democratic development. Given Liberia's developing democracy, it is critical that the October 2005 elections succeed. Well-trained domestic and international election observers will be critical to that success.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### **GENERAL**

##### **Political Assessments**

In May 2005, IRI-Liberia conducted two-day assessments in Maryland and Sinoe Counties to assess the logistical and training needs of political parties and the level of political activity. IRI-Liberia also examined the logistical and infrastructure support needed for conducting a large-scale Election Observation (EO) during the October elections. In the course of the assessments, IRI-Liberia held meetings with stakeholders, partners, and political party representatives in both counties. The assessments revealed that the ERIS/Carter Centre is providing adequate training for political parties in Harper, the capital of Maryland County. In consideration of EO activities in and around Harper, food and restaurants do not appear to be an issue, but only one guest house provides very basic accommodations. The road to Maryland has deteriorated significantly and currently a UN helicopter is the only viable travel option. Security was not a concern in Harper

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

but in the neighboring city of Plebo, locals expressed security concerns over the rubber plantation. Only three parties were visible in Harper, the National Patriotic Party (NPP), the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) party and the Unity Party (UP). In Greenville, the capital of Sinoe County, the assessment revealed that United Peoples' Party (UPP), Liberia Action Party (LAP) and UP were barely visible. With the low level of party activity, Greenville currently does not appear to be an appropriate region in which to conduct County-level trainings. In regard to the EO, lodging and transport facilities are virtually nonexistent there. Roundtrip travel time to and from was nearly 18 hours with brief stops and poor road conditions. Nonetheless, conducting an EO in Sinoe County remains a high consideration, and will require detailed planning.

## Meetings

### *USAID Implementing Partners Meetings:*

In May 2005, IRI-Liberia attended the monthly implementing partners meeting where the voter registration exercise dominated the discussion. Potential conflict with the Mandingo ethnic group and the inadequate number of registration sites were of primary concern to USAID's Mission Director, Dr. Wilbur Thomas. Dr. Thomas informed partners that outgoing U.S. Ambassador John Blaney would be succeeded by Ambassador Donald Booth, pending congressional confirmation. (Ambassador Booth is expected to arrive in Liberia in late July 2005.) IRI-Liberia hosted the June 2005 meeting for USAID Implementing Partners. Dr. Wilbur Thomas stressed the importance of continued coordination and cooperation by all those involved in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Liberia, and added that USAID mission staff numbers would be increasing. The Mission is looking to expand support to its partners as Liberia transitions from an emergency assistance country to a longer-term development program.

## Political Developments

### *Six More Parties Join the Race:*

In May 2005, The National Elections Commission (NEC) certificated six new political parties, the United Democratic Party (UDP) of Cllr. Charles Brumskine, the Liberty Party (LP) of Rev. Dr. George Zorbah, George Weah's Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), Rev. Hanniah Zoe's Liberia Educational and Development Party (LEAD), the Union of Liberian Democrats (ULD), and the National Party of Liberia (NPL). IRI-Liberia visited three of the six new parties in Monrovia, including the CDC, LEAD, and the ULD to congratulate the political parties on their registration. In addition, LEAP, ULD, ULD, and NPL attended a briefing at the IRI-Liberia Resource Center which provided an opportunity for the new parties to gain insights into IRI-Liberia's political strengthening program and the types of technical support the Institute provides in Liberia. IRI-Liberia presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding to the parties for their review and hopes to enter into an MOU with each of the new parties before the end of July 2005. (The total number stood at 30 just after the quarter covered by this report.)

## April

### *IRI, IFES and NDI Conclude Stakeholders' Forum:*

The CEPPS Implementing Partners in Liberia (IRI, IFES and NDI) ended a three-day Stakeholders' Forum titled "*Promoting Peaceful and Legitimate Elections in Liberia.*" The event was attended by a wide array of local and international stakeholders, including: the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), the (NEC), The Liberian National Police (LNP), political parties (registered and proposed), civil society organizations, United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the U.S. Mission to Liberia, members of the diplomatic corps, officials from the Carter Center and many others. The Forum sought to build consensus on the challenges relating to four cross-sectoral election-related issues, and included panel presentations and plenary sessions on *Administration of Electoral Security, Participation in Elections* and *Campaigning*. On the final day, actions steps were identified to address the challenges and a preliminary report was presented on the way forward.

#### *Political Parties Signed First Code:*

An historic achievement of the Stakeholders' Consultative Forum was the signing of the first ever Code of Conduct by the Registered Political Parties in Liberia. The Code lays the ground rules of engagement, establishes the standards of acceptable behavior, and seeks to promote a peaceful and legitimate electoral process. All 18 registered parties adopted the Code, which was also endorsed by the NEC, UNMIL, CSOs, IRI and Development Consultants. All Political Parties, including those that have been recognized by the NEC after The Code was signed, are expected to abide and adopt the same code of conduct before fielding candidates in the October 2005 elections. *See Code of Conduct Attached.*

#### *Two Political Parties Form United Front:*

In April 2005, IRI-Liberia observed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the UPP and the LPP. The MOU commemorated the Alliance for Peace and Democracy (APD) and will serve as the vehicle of political coalition as these parties look toward the October elections. Two other parties that were supposed to join the alliance, the UP and the NDPL, pulled out at the eleventh hour, citing the need for further internal party consultations.

#### Workshop

##### *IRI-Liberia Ends ToT Training for Parties' Agents:*

In furtherance of its political party capacity building project, IRI-Liberia, in collaboration with the Carter Centre-UK, organized a two-day Voter Registration Training of Trainers Workshop for parties' agents in Monrovia. The program was attended by some 80 party agents representing all 18 registered political parties in Liberia where participants gained valuable instruction on the 2004 Electoral Reform Law, 2005 NEC Voter Registration Guidelines, the electoral system, the delimitation exercise and the registration procedures. Presentations on effective techniques for mobilizing potential voters to register, conflict prevention and resolution as well as the "do's and do not's" of party agents at the registration center were delivered. Fifty percent of trainees were women.

#### Meetings

##### *IRI-Liberia, IFES and NDI Meet with NTGL Vice-Chairman and other election stakeholders:*

In preparation for the Stakeholders' Forum to Promote Peaceful and Legitimate Elections, IRI, IFES and NDI held a series of briefings with the NTGL Vice Chairman, the acting Speaker of the NTLA, the President of The University of Liberia, ECOWAS representatives, and other stakeholders in order to provide objectives of the CEPPS-sponsored forum. To attain increased public awareness of the forum, the CEPPS partners conducted special interviews on local TV and radio stations.

## **May**

### *IRI-Liberia Observes Voter Registration Around Bushrod Island, Monrovia:*

In the second week of the Voter Registration Exercise, IRI-Liberia observed proceedings at eight registration centers on Bushrod Island, an area of Monrovia with significant a Mandingo population. General participation in the voter registration exercise at the centers selected was tepid. On the high end, one center had registered 1100 voters and, on the low end, two centers recorded a total of only 200 registered voters. Some Voter Registrars were not fully versed in voter eligibility objection procedures, and were not able to articulate proper procedures until after extensive questioning. Eligibility objections on file contested either the age or the citizenship of the applicant. On the security front, UNMIL security patrols around registration centers were notably absent. One registration center had one local uniformed police on duty.

### *Voter Registration Ends:*

On May 21, 2005, The NEC concluded the month-long voter registration exercise (with an additional two-week extension for refugee returnees bearing UNHCR identification cards). According to preliminary registration results, Montserrado, Nimba, Bong, Margibi and Lofa registered the highest number of eligible voters and will dominate the legislature. The entire southeastern region of Liberia remains the most under-populated region in the country and, as a result, will have only nominal representation in the next House of Representatives. According to an NEC release, approximately 1.3 million people registered, with women making up 50% of those registered.

### *IRI-Led pre EO-Assessment Mission to Liberia Lauds the Registration Process:*

In a briefing to the local press, IRI's Pre-Elections International Observation team, led by former US Ambassador Robert Gribbin, commended the registration exercise as credible, transparent and free of any egregious error. The team started its mission in Liberia on May 16, 2005, visiting officials of the NTGL, NTLA and the NEC, local and international elections stakeholders. The team toured nearly two dozen registration sites located in Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa, Margibi, Bomi, Cape Mount, Bomi counties, as well as visits to the voter registration processing center and select registration centers in Monrovia.

## **Meetings**

IRI-Liberia attended several IPCC meetings chaired by the NEC. Citing an inability to comply, RPPs flatly rejected the draft NEC Party Finance Regulations that was being developed with technical assistance of international partners. The parties formed a technical committee, which met several times at IRI-Liberia's resource center, to review the regulations and present an alternative proposal to the NEC. During a subsequent IPCC meeting, the parties (17 of 24)

signed an MOU agreeing to the allocation of seats for the House of Representatives. The allocation of seats in the counties will be based on the percentage of number of voters registered in each county out of the total number of registered voters in the country. In a related development, the NEC adjusted the campaign period, which will now commence on August 15 and conclude on October 10, 2005. The campaign period was previously slated to run from September 1 to October 10, 2005.

## **June**

### **Workshop**

IRI-Liberia conducted a two-day technical training for women and youth in politics. IRI-Liberia staff served as the lead facilitators throughout the workshop, while local and international experts in Liberia were invited to lend knowledge during specialized sessions. In an interactive environment and using participatory teaching methodologies, trainees examined various approaches to enhance the political participation of women and youth and develop strategies to increase the visibility of women and youth at all levels of party structures.

#### *IRI-Liberia Facilitates Roundtable:*

IRI-Liberia, in conjunction with NDI-Liberia, facilitated another CSO/Political Party Roundtable coordinated by the Liberian Federation of Youth (FLY). The event addressed “Strengthening Democracy in Liberia: Enhancing Youth Participation in the Political Process.” With nearly 50% of registered voters comprised of youth, young people will play a critical role in the success of the electoral process. This roundtable, held at University of Liberia, was the first major forum that brought together youth from diverse political and social backgrounds to discuss their roles and find a way forward in enhancing youth participation in Liberia’s political process. Youth panelists representing Civil Society Organizations and RPPs led the debate, while 136 students from six universities and colleges participated in the plenary discussion on issues affecting them, as well as their historic and contemporary roles in impacting the political processes in Liberia.

### **Meetings**

IRI-Liberia observed the fifth and final Nationwide Consultative Forum that brought together local and traditional leaders from Liberia. The NEC has held a series of consultations with local and traditional representative in five regions spanning country. These consultations were intended to sensitize local leaders on the upcoming elections by examining the following electoral issues: (1) The Importance of Elections for Peace in Liberia; (2) The Role of Local and Traditional Leaders in the October 2005 Electoral Process; (3) Prevention of Unfair Electoral Practices during the October 2005 Elections; and (4) Obstacles to the Holding of Elections in October 2005 and the way forward. The delegates were very responsive to the NEC’s initiative and appreciated the Commission’s effort to reach out to various communities situated outside of Monrovia. The delegates acknowledged the critical role they played in the recent voter registration drive. Not surprisingly, limited communication capacity is a significant hurdle to be overcome as elections draw near. Greater dissemination of information in the rural areas, as well as increased voter/civic education throughout the country remain vital to a successful, free, transparent and legitimate election in Liberia.

#### **IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Objective: To improve political party capacity to implement voter-oriented, effective campaigns.**

IRI-Liberia's workshops and activities this quarter provided Registered Political Parties (RPPs) in the country with technical assistance to build their capacities to responsibly and effectively participate in the voter registration campaign. IRI-Liberia's technical training for RPPs for women and youth also generated greater awareness on the need to effectively reach out to and address the needs of marginalized groups. Training sessions on conflict prevention and mitigation provided party agents with valuable skills that contribute to a violence-free electoral process. IRI-Liberia's assistance to political parties in producing a Code of Conduct lays the groundwork for effective, responsible and violence-free political campaigning. Through the Code of Conduct, political parties and other stakeholders have agreed to certain moral guidelines of acceptable behavior to govern political parties, candidates, and their supporters throughout the electoral process. The participation of political parties in this process lends greater transparency, legitimacy and accountability to the parties.

**Objective: To enable political parties to develop long-term organizational development plans.**

IRI-Liberia's technical training workshop on *Enhancing the Participation of Women and Youth in Political Parties* provided tools and organizational development strategies that will benefit the political parties long after the 2005 elections. It is equally important to build broad-based support not only preceding elections, but *beyond* elections. The training received by political parties at the workshop will assist parties to improve their outreach strategies and links to women and youth during and after the election. Political party representatives involved in this workshop expressed the importance of this training to their long-term development, and even extended the training to receive more counsel in this regard.

**Objective: To strengthen political parties' ability to contribute to Liberia's governance.**

IRI-Liberia's ongoing consultations with Liberia's political parties have provided IRI-Liberia with critical feedback on ways to strengthen the parties' abilities to contribute to governance. In addition, IRI-Liberia's continual facilitation of activities between political parties and other state structures such as the NEC and civil society groups prepare political parties to add valuable input to effective governance in Liberia.

**Objective: To promote party participation to ensure credible and peaceful electoral and political processes.**

IRI-Liberia's activities this quarter have promoted the participation of political parties to ensure credible and peaceful electoral and political processes. IRI-Liberia's assistance led to the adoption and endorsement of the first-ever Code of Conduct for Political Parties and IRI-



Liberia's continued support of the IPCC and guidance during deliberations fosters a transparent political atmosphere in which participation is essential.

#### **IV. EVALUATION**

Liberian parties working with IRI-Liberia have continued to display a willingness to cooperate and implement basic tenets of democracy during the upcoming elections. This coupled with the optimism of the general populace has enabled IRI-Liberia to assist them in taking needed steps towards ensuring safe, free and fair elections in October. A strong reflection of the desire of Liberians to have proper elections this quarter was evident with the signing of the Code of Conduct by 18 registered parties at the Stakeholders Consultative Forum. In addition to this signing, IRI-Liberia's observations of voter registrations, political roundtables, and workshops for the technical training of women and youth in politics have also increased the chances of the October elections being successful. Strengthening political parties and assuring the spread of election information to all parts of Liberia remains a challenge for upcoming quarters.

#### **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

In the next quarter, IRI-Liberia has planned the following activities: (1) Technical training on media communication in party campaigns, (2) Mini workshops on coalition building, party platforms and policy development, (3) Radio talk shows to provide an opportunity for registered political parties to share the ideologies and general information with the public, (4) National-level Candidate debates and (5) County-level Town hall Forums.

The total number of registered political parties in Liberia at the close of this quarter covered by this report was 24, but rose to 30 in the ensuing quarter. The increased number of parties will likely have budgetary implications for IRI-Liberia, as current funding under the Political Party Strengthening Project in Liberia was derived in consideration of 18 parties.

# **LIBERIA**

## **POLITICAL PARTIES' CODE OF CONDUCT, 2005**

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## **I. DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this Code:

- “Party” means an entity duly registered with the NEC of Liberia in accordance with Article 78 of the Constitution.
- “Parties” means two or more of the aforementioned entities.
- “Candidate” means an individual contesting office during the 2005 elections.
- “National Elections Commission” hereinafter “NEC” means the National Elections Commission of Liberia.
- “Inter-Party Consultative Committee” hereinafter “IPCC” refers to that body established on 25 February 2005 between signatory Political Parties and NEC.
- “The Code” or “this Code” means the Liberia Political Parties’ Code of Conduct, 2005.
- “Constitution” refers to the 1986 Constitution of the Republic of Liberia.
- Public Resources refers to all property held in trust for the collective use of Citizens of Liberia, including but not limited to Government of Liberia property, state-owned corporations and all other resources not privately held.

## **II. PREAMBLE**

The roots of a thriving democracy are to be found in justice, domestic peace and within the welfare of the people, stability and rule of law as well as through non-discretionary compliance by all stakeholders with electoral laws and regulations. Equally vital is equality of access to political opportunities for all Political Parties facilitated by the existence of a level playing field to promote free, fair and credible elections and the acceptance of certified results from the polls.

Recognizing that inclusiveness, tolerance, transparency and pluralism are necessary for an effective democracy, and determined to realize the objectives of a model democracy and to consolidate democratic governance in our homeland, we, the Political Parties of Liberia, do individually, collectively and voluntarily adopt for ourselves, this Code of Conduct to govern our activities and foster the establishment of genuine democracy in our country. We hereby pledge to one another and to the people of Liberia, to promote and uphold the guidelines and principles of this Code. We acknowledge the authority of the NEC in regard to the exercise of its constitutional and statutory powers and undertake to facilitate the Commission’s mandate.

### **III. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF VOLUNTARY CODE OF CONDUCT FOR POLITICAL PARTIES**

Whereas, prior to the adoption of This Code, no code of conduct for Political Parties has been adopted to establish and acknowledge a minimum standard of acceptable behavior for Political Parties and their supporters and to safeguard against political violence, intimidation and manipulation;

Appreciating the binding nature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 18 August 2003, the presence and assistance of the international community, the political parties of Liberia hereby voluntarily commit to this Code to enable Liberians to exercise their constitutional rights to democratically elect their public officials;

All parties hereby agree unequivocally to adopt and adhere, in its entirety, to this Code and by so doing commit to contribute to free, fair, transparent and credible elections;

The parties hereby commit to this Code voluntarily realizing that compliance shall not be discretionary.

### **IV. DEMOCRATIC RELEVANCE**

Democracy exists within a legal context underpinned by fairness, the rule of law, freedom to express divergent opinions, equality of access to opportunities and through adherence to constitutional provisions that stipulate the rights and responsibilities of the citizen;

Democracy inculcates respect for human rights, the pursuit of civil and political liberties, the tolerance of divergent opinions, the full and active participation of women in the political process and the inclusion of the various religious and ethnic segments of society;

Democracy legitimizes government through an electoral process to select public officials, which is conducted at regular intervals and is accentuated by the informed choice of voters, who are able to cast their ballot freely, without interference, fear, intimidation or bribery;

Through the acknowledgment and promotion of the above mentioned ideals, political parties of Liberia willfully pledge to support this Code of Conduct and the principles stated herein.

## **V. RESOLUTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES OF LIBERIA PURSUANT TO THE FORMULATION OF A POLITICAL PARTIS CODE OF CONDUCT (2005)**

We, representatives of Political Parties in Liberia:

Determined to uphold and defend Liberia's 1986 Constitution and its democratic ideals;

Committed to the promotion and development of peaceful and stable political, economic and social conditions in Liberia;

Compelled to transform our country from its current state of deterioration to an inspiration within the sub-region and the continent as a whole;

United in our commitment to the growth and development of responsible multiparty democracy, and to the decentralization of the political powers in our country in place of the authoritarian political power center that generally contributed to the dysfunctional state system and governance;

Determined to build lasting democratic self-governance for present and future generations of Liberians;

Resolved to voluntarily uphold this Code regulating the conduct of Political Parties and maintain the benchmarks of permissible behavior of parties, during and between elections;

Agreed that the formulation of this Code marks the beginning of a new era of partnership between the Political Parties of Liberia and the citizens of Liberia, to promote and deepen democracy in Liberia;

Held a series of consultative sessions during the month of February 2005 to formulate this inaugural Political Parties Code of Conduct 2005, with the active support and participation of the NEC, Political Parties and other stakeholders in the electoral process;

Committed to the dissemination of this Code to our respective party members and supporters throughout our constituencies;

Resolved that respective political parties and candidates subscribe to the following terms and provisions:

1. To adhere to all existing laws pertaining to the conduct of Political Parties in the upcoming elections, especially those provisions of the elections guidelines established by the NEC through the authority of the Electoral Reform Law published by authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2004.
2. Political Parties shall not obstruct, disrupt, break-up meetings or cause to be broken up, meetings, rallies or other activities organized by other Political Parties; nor should they interrupt or prevent speeches and the distribution of handbills, leaflets, and the pasting of posters by other Parties.
3. Political Parties shall not destroy, remove, deface or in any way tamper with the paraphernalia, logos, symbols, handbills and publicity materials of other Political Parties.

4. Political Parties shall desist from carrying and/or displaying arms and offensive weapons at political and related activities and shall extend co-operation to law enforcement agencies and authorities, particularly for the purpose of recovery of illegal arms.
5. Political Parties shall not exercise undue influence, or take extra legal measures for the release of any person arrested for carrying arms or offensive weapons during the electoral period.
6. Political parties shall not engage, recruit or deploy any individual(s) for the purpose of violence, intimidation or harassment.
7. Political Parties shall, in good faith coordinate their campaign activities in such a way that no two political parties shall hold public meetings or rallies at the same venue and/or locality on the same day, if such meetings or rallies are likely to be at venues so close to each other that a possibility of conflict arises.
8. Where dates, venue and timing for any of the above activities conflict, representatives of the affected Political Parties shall, in collaboration with the local authorities, meet in a cordial manner to resolve issues without resorting to violence.
9. Political Parties shall not utilize public resources for party activities and shall not permit any of its sponsored candidates holding public office to use public office for the purposes of political campaigning in elections.
10. Political Parties shall avoid all activities constituting electoral offences as defined by Liberian law.
11. Political Parties shall suspend election related activities and shall not hold public meetings or rallies within the polling precincts on polling day and within 24 hours of the polls.
12. Political Parties shall not resort to the use of abusive, profane or inflammatory language or incitement; specifically, all Political Parties shall refrain from incitement on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, creed, sect or any other criterion.
13. Political Parties shall not plagiarize the platforms, symbols, slogans and paraphernalia of other Political Parties.
14. Political Parties shall not obstruct, harass or intimidate journalists nor shall parties abuse, insult or threaten election officials and workers for actions taken and decisions reached in line with their official duties.
15. Political Parties shall respect the rights and freedom of other parties to campaign and to disseminate their political ideals and principals without fear, intimidation or harassment.
16. The use of churches, mosques, temples, or other places of divine worship as well as the use of traditional and cultural practices, shall not deny others of their right of political participation and expression;
17. Political Parties and candidates shall ensure that their agents and officials are sufficiently trained for voter registration, polling day and other election related activities.

18. Political Parties shall recognize and acknowledge the rights of accredited observers and monitors at polling stations for the purpose of observing the conduct of elections.
19. Political Parties undertake to work with the NEC to create an atmosphere conducive to free and fair voting, thereby refraining from coercion, threats, fear, intimidation and reappraisals.
20. Political Parties shall refrain from fraudulently procuring results and votes by invasion and forcible occupation of polling centers, the manipulation or corruption of ballot boxes, tally sheets or by any other unlawful means.
21. Political Parties undertake to instruct their supporters, representatives and agents in attendance at polling stations to perform their duties in accordance with the electoral laws and regulations and to cooperate with election officials for the efficient, transparent and uninterrupted administration of elections.

#### **VI. PARTIES COMMIT TO ACCEPT CERTIFIED RESULTS**

Political Parties undertake to amicably resolve all complaints in compliance with existing Liberian law and to accept the certified results of the elections.

#### **VII. ENFORCEMENT**

1. When there is a breach of any of the provisions of this Code, the Political Party adversely affected shall, as a first option, report the breach to the offending Political Party and shall seek to amicably resolve the dispute.
2. Where a dispute arising out of a breach of the provision of this Code is not amicably resolved, it may be reported to the IPCC which shall give a fair and expeditious hearing to the Political Parties involved in the form of reprimands that may be recommended to NEC for further consideration. Repeat violations will be reported to the proper authorities including but not limited to the Supreme Court.
3. The above remedies are without prejudice to the rights of victims to pursue other legal action.

#### **VIII. IMPLEMENTATION**

Every Political Party shall ensure that this Code is made fully known to its members and supporters, and that it is fully observed. In addition, the Political Parties have undertaken to publicize the Code to the general Public by all means available to them.



**IX. SIGNATURE PAGE**

This Code was adopted by Political Parties of Liberia this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005

For: All Liberian Coalition Party (ALCOP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: National Patriotic Party (NPP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Free Democratic Party (FDP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: National Reformation Party (NRP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Liberia Action Party (LAP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: New Deal Movement (New Deal)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Liberia Equal Rights Party (LERP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: People's Democratic Party of Liberia (PDPL)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Liberia National Union (LINU)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: Progressive People's Party (PPP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Labor Party of Liberia (LPL)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title	For: Reformation Alliance Party (RAP)  _____ Principal Name/Title  _____ Witness Name/Title

For: Liberia Peoples' Party (LPP) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title	For: True Whig Party (TWP) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title
For: Liberia Unification Party (LUP) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title	For: Unity Party (UP) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title
For: National Democratic Party Of Liberia (NDPL) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title	For: United Peoples' Party (UPP) _____ Principal Name/Title _____ Witness Name/Title

**Signed in the presence of and endorsed by:**

For: The National Elections Commission

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

For: United Nations Mission in Liberia

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

For: International Republican Institute

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

For: Development Consultants

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

For: Civil Society Coalitions (2 representatives):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title